



Immigration and Customs Enforcement



United States Attorney's Office
District of Arizona

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DRAFT

SIX MORE ARIZONA MEN INDICTED IN NATIONWIDE INVESTIGATION OF INTERNET CHILD PORNOGRAPHY TRADE

TUCSON, Ariz.- Six Southern Arizona men have been indicted by a federal grand jury in Tucson on charges of receipt and possession of child pornography. The six are the latest to be charged in a nationwide investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) targeting a website that offered images and movies of hardcore child pornography. The six are Antonio Neira, 24, of Oro Valley; Dennis Torres, 26, of Tucson; Zachary Z. Stephenson, 20, of Tucson; Deverne E. Horton, 77, of Tucson; Christian Gudino, 24, of Tucson; and Lane Pickart, 52, of Tucson, Arizona.

U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona Paul K. Charlton stated: "We continue to work alongside law enforcement to target and takedown those who use the Internet to trade in child pornography. We will not tolerate child exploitation on the world wide web any more than we will tolerate it in our communities."

Federal search warrants had been issued to search the six men's computers in August 2006. In the course of the investigation, agents learned that these six defendants had purchased subscriptions to a child pornography website. The agents seized each of the defendants' personal computers and computer-related equipment. A forensic analysis of these computers and equipment revealed that they each possessed and/or received child pornography in interstate commerce.

Operation Emissary has resulted in at least 125 arrests in 22 states. In October, four other Arizona men, Lawrence Amber, 30, and David Troglin, 53, both of Kingman; Andre Rauen, 30, of Phoenix; and James Shepherd, 60, of Prescott, were arrested and charged with receipt of child pornography.

Alonzo Peña, Special Agent in Charge of ICE Office of Investigations in Phoenix, stated: "The scope of this investigation and the number of arrests that have been made so far are a clear indication fo ICE's resolve to search out those who use the Internet to sexually exploit innocent children. Some predators mistakenly believe the anonymity of cyberspace shields them from scrutiny; in fact, their use of computers and the Internet have given us new tools in our enforcement efforts."

The indictments allege that all six defendant possessed computer images depicting minors who had been sexually exploited. The indictments against defendants Gudino, Horton, Stephenson, and Pickart further allege that they had received child pornography in interstate commerce.

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A conviction for Receipt of Child Pornography carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 5 years imprisonment, a maximum sentence of 20 years imprisonment, and \$250,000 fine or both and the possibility of lifetime supervised release. Possession of Child Pornography carries a maximum sentence of up to 10 years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine or both, and the possibility of lifetime supervised release. In determining an actual sentence, the judge will consult the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

An indictment is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The investigation preceding the indictment was conducted by Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Oro Valley Police Department. The prosecution is being handled by David Paul Flannigan, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.

CASE NUMBERS: CR06-1570; CR06-1878; CR06-1879; CR06-1880; CR06-1881; and CR06-1912
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